

# EXPOSITION

OF THE

OBJECTS AND PLANS

OF

THE AMERICAN UNION

FOR THE

RELIEF AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE COLORED RACE

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THE American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race, was formed on the 14th day of January, 1835, by a Convention of more than one hundred gentlemen, assembled in the city of Boston, from ten different states. It was formed in consequence of extensive correspondence and conference among intelligent friends of the Colored Race, and in the devout hope of contributing something to that great design in which all truly Christian enterprises unite and centre, the design of healing the miseries of a miserable world, and establishing everywhere, and in every heart, the kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy, and in which there is neither Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ, the common Saviour and Lord, the great restorer from moral corruption, the great deliverer from the oppression of malignant powers, and from the darkness and bitterness of human wo, is all, and in all.

The distinct and single object to which the efforts of this Union are to be directed, is sufficiently indicated by the title which the society assumed at its formation. We have associated ourselves to act 'for the relief and improvement of the Colored Race.' Of that race, we find at the present time, within the boundaries of our own country, not fewer than 2,500,000 souls. A greater part of these are destitute of intellectual cultivation, of habits of voluntary indus-

try, and of a knowledge of the arts of civilization. Multitudes may also be set down as pagans, no more affected by the genial and saving influences of the Christianity that fills the land, than were their fathers in the wildernesses of Africa. More than two millions of them, the law of the land refuses to recognize as having the rights of human beings; and not only so, but holds them, with its strong arm, in a condition in which they are continually liable, and liable without remedy, to wrongs the most outrageous that tyranny can practise upon helplessness. Some three or four hundred thousand are recognized by the laws as having rights; and their condition, under the various legislation of different states and territories, and variously modified by the usages and sentiments of society in different places, is one which allows them at least some hope and means of self-improvement. Yet of this privileged fragment, the civil and social privations, the intellectual and moral wants, and the physical sufferings, are notoriously such as demand the efficient sympathy of all who would honor God by seeking to promote the well being of his creatures made in his image.

The constitution of our Union does not confine our views or our efforts to the Colored Race in this country. Here, indeed, our energies are to be employed first and most continually. Here are to be achieved, if at all, our greatest and most desired successes. Yet we are not to forget that the colored people in this country are part of a depressed and wretched, though most interesting race of men; and that the moral, intellectual and political elevation of that race, in any one quarter of the world, is likely to be accelerated by its elevation or retarded by its continued depression in whatever other regions it inhabits.

The full attainment of our object will include the abrogation of all those laws which lay oppressive burthens on the people of color, or which exclude them from a participation in those privileges which ought to be the equal inheritance of all the members of society. It will include the conversion of this great mass of operatives, whose labor is now for the most part compulsory, and therefore far less profitable than it ought to be, into willing, intelligent, provident and self-directing laborers, whose labor shall be at once cheaper to the capitalist, more productive of comforts to themselves, and more valuable to the commonwealth. It will involve the bringing of all the influences of civilization, of good government and of Christi-

anity, into free and effectual contact with that great portion of our population, which, now, these influences either do not affect at all, or at the best, touch only inadequately and at a disadvantage. Our object is not merely that they shall be relieved from compulsory labor; it is rather that they shall become industrious and efficient voluntary laborers. Our object is not merely that they shall be at liberty to learn, and shall have the opportunity of learning; it is rather that they shall be actually taught, and shall become intelligent men, with all the sensibility and worth, as well as with all the rights of manhood.

In other words, the successful prosecution of our object will involve the abolition of slavery. We shall never accomplish 'the relief and improvement of the Colored Race,' to the full extent of our designs, while the men and women of that race are bought and sold in the shambles—never, while the law refuses to recognize and protect their domestic relations—never, while the law places them at the mercy of masters whose power over them is boundless, or if limited, limited only on the side of mercy and love. Therefore we seek the abolition of this slavery. We seek it, not indeed as the end of our association, but as a means to our end, or rather as the removal of an obstacle which cannot be surmounted. It is not our great end; for if the legal forms of slavery were to cease throughout the United States this day, the demand for such efforts as our Union contemplates, would be more imperious and impressive than it is at this moment. Nor do we seek it as that without which we cannot begin to operate; much can be done for the relief and improvement of the Colored Race in this country and elsewhere, while the measures necessary to effect the abolition of slavery are only in progress. We seek it, as that which is essential to the full attainment of our object. We seek it, as that which must necessarily go along with the relief and improvement of the Colored Race, here and in all other countries.

With this view, and because the slavery existing in this country is a thing respecting which voices as of a legion are continually crying out 'Let it alone,' the Convention which formed this Union made mention of slavery in the second article of its constitution. By that article we are pledged as a society, to use our exertions to convince all our countrymen 'that slavery, as it exists in these United States, is wrong, and ought to be abandoned.' There are moralists in our

country, who profess that slavery as it exists in the United States is not wrong; that Christianity allows it, and sanctifies it. There are political economists in America, who maintain that slavery is not wrong; that it is indispensable to the successful production of wealth: that the labor of unintelligent, sluggish, wasteful drudges, is more profitable to the employer and to the community, than the labor of contriving, self-tasked, enterprising, thrifty freemen. There are jurists and statesmen in America, who maintain that slavery is not wrong—men who, with a boiling love of constitutional liberty, and with a patriotic zeal for the supremacy of written and strictly construed law, and with a chivalrous jealousy of irresponsible power, argue that such slavery as oppresses more than two millions of our population, is essential to the majesty and dignity of national character, nay, essential to the permanence and to the very spirit of liberty. Against all these, we maintain, and expect to show, that slavery is wrong—wrong morally—wrong economically—wrong politically—wrong in every one of its aspects and relations. We expect to show this so clearly, that not only the intelligent, the disinterested, the candid, but even the prejudiced, the perverse, and the ‘slow of heart,’ shall be compelled to see it. This we say, not arrogantly presuming on the ability with which we expect to argue the question, but simply relying on the truth, the demonstrable truth of our position, that slavery is wrong in every aspect and relation. We do not expect to carry our point by the eloquence of our appeals to passion, by arguments *a priori*, or by inference from any metaphysical theory of the origin of civil rights and social duties. If the conviction which we aim to produce, cannot be produced by the patient induction and the naked exhibition of facts, showing beyond the possibility of denial, what slavery is in law, and in usage; what it is in its various influences, and what it is in contrast with that state of society in which all are free,—then we must fail.

There is another and more obstinate error in respect to slavery in this country, which we are pledged to resist. Thousands will admit that slavery is wrong, who yet—strange as the statement seems—do not admit that slavery as it exists in this country ought to be abandoned. In other words, admitting that slavery is evil and only evil, they do not admit that the evil can be remedied. Show them that the system violates, and seeks to efface God’s image in the nature of man; they acknowledge it. Show them that the employment of

slave labor in the cultivation of the soil, or in any of the operations of productive industry, is a wretched and wasteful contrivance, at war with all the improvements of progressive civilization; they acknowledge that it is even so. Show them that the subjection of one sixth of our people to arbitrary power, the government of brute force, is a perilous anomaly in the legislation of a republic whose welfare is pre-eminently dependent on the unarmed administration of universally venerated law; they acknowledge the anomaly and the peril. But, with all these admissions, they maintain that, as slavery here is an established system, it ought not to be meddled with; that the difficulties in the way of its abolition or mitigation are insuperable; that, dreadful and deadly as the evil is, it is less than the evils which would infallibly be involved in any remedial action; and that therefore, while we lament its existence, we must submit to it, as to a decree of iron destiny. In opposition to such opinions, our constitution as a society binds us to maintain, that slavery 'ought to be universally abandoned.' We are aware of the difficulties which must encompass every legislative movement for the extinction of slavery. We have no sympathy with those who speak as if the abolition of a system on which, in many of our states, the whole fabric of society rests, the adjustment of all the warring interests which that system involves, the conversion of a brutalized slave population into a population of industrious freemen, the protection of the emancipated against the masters who have not forgotten to despise and oppress, and the protection of the masters against the outbrealking passions of freed men who have not learned that true freedom means labor and subjection, were as easy a piece of legislation as to change a man's name from Richard to John. Yet, on the other hand, we have no patience, and desire to have none, with the folly which asserts that slavery is to be borne with eternally, as an incurable and necessary evil. For such wrongs, there can be and must be a remedy. We need not undertake to announce, at the outset, a system or scheme of legislative action for the abolition of slavery; but we may say that whenever the people of the slave-holding states shall generally see the criminality, the impoverishing tendencies, and the dangers of that system, their political wisdom, guided by the experience of other countries and of other ages, will find out a method of relief. 'Where there is a *will*, there is a *way*.'

While pursuing thus the effort to enlighten public sentiment in regard to the many evils of slavery, we hope not to be betrayed into a hostility towards slave-holders, which shall eat out the spirit of philanthropy in which the effort has its origin; we hope not to become so inflamed with the zeal of propagandism, as to forget that this effort is only subordinate to our great end, the relief and improvement of the Colored Race. Our object is simply to do good, and to persuade others to do good, to an unfortunate race of our fellow men,—to do them good wherever we can find them, north or south, in this country or in other lands,—to do them good now to the extent of our present opportunities of benefiting them, in the full expectation that the doing of it will ensure other and better opportunities, and will infallibly open the way for doing more and more, till the work of their relief and improvement shall have been completed.

To the question, why we have formed ourselves into a distinct and permanent association for the prosecution of this object, we give a candid and explicit answer; and we are the more particular to do this, because we are unwilling to leave any ground for misunderstanding or jealousy in any quarter.

1. We do not overlook the efforts which have already been made in our country, for this object. Far from us be the folly of imagining that we are undertaking a work entirely new; and the arrogance of representing that, till our particular effort was set on foot, the claims of our colored brethren were unheard, and their sufferings unnoticed. For the last fifty years, the patriotism, the benevolence, the justice of our countrymen has been, to some extent, mindful of the wants and wrongs of this portion of our population. In all the states from Massachusetts to Delaware, slavery has been, within that period, either totally or virtually abolished. In all the states, from Maine at least as far as Georgia, Christians of various denominations have exerted themselves either separately or in combination, to supply this distinct class with appropriate means of religious and moral instruction. In the middle and northern states, there is a strong feeling of opposition to slavery, which they regard as a blot on the character and a blight on the prosperity of our great republic—a feeling which, more than once, has broken out with an intense excitement, shaking, not the capitol only, but the nation. Again and again have schools been attempted, with various success, for the purpose of affording a higher education to individuals whose talents

and disposition seemed to give special promise of usefulness among their brethren. And though of late that feeling has been perhaps less efficacious, in consequence of contentions among the friends of the colored man, it is not unreasonable to hope that even these contentions may ere long result in a more vigorous, more rational, more united, and therefore more powerful public sentiment, than has ever yet spoken out in this land for the slave and for the freeman of the slave's unhappy lineage. We commence this effort, then, without overlooking the efforts which have been already made in the same cause, and without disparaging either the success of those efforts, or the hopes which that success may reasonably inspire.

2. Nor is our Union formed with the design of opposition to any efforts previously organized. Two Societies, calling themselves American, and professedly seeking in different ways the elevation of the colored man, are already in the field. To neither of these do we place ourselves in opposition. So far as our views of justice and benevolence and wisdom will allow, we shall be ready to co-operate with either, or with both, for the attainment of objects common to them and to us.

The American Colonization Society, with its Auxiliaries, is planting colonies of colored Americans in Africa. In this undertaking, if benevolently and wisely managed, we see nothing hostile to the relief and elevation of the Colored Race in this country; but on the contrary, much, if we mistake not, which tends to elevate their social and moral standing. Against all those unequal laws and usages, in every part of the nation, which tend to depress the man of color, to make even his freedom no better than an empty name, and ultimately to expel him from the country in which he and his fathers have too dearly purchased a right of residence, we are ready to protest on every fit occasion. But we see no reason to protest against the enterprize of providing for such colored men as may desire it, an escape from the oppressions and unpropitious influences which here encompass them, or even against their being invited to improve the opportunity of securing a new home for themselves and their children. Nor, on the other hand, do we conceive that, by any benevolent and reasonable mind, our undertaking can be regarded as hostile or rival to that.

The American Anti-Slavery Society is seeking, as its end, the abolition of slavery, and, as a means to that end, the improvement

and social elevation of the free people of color. Our enterprise, surely, is not hostile to the object proposed by that society. The relief and improvement of the Colored Race cannot be put in opposition to the abolition of slavery. They, indeed, of the Anti-Slavery Society, regard our end as in order to theirs; and we regard their end as in order to ours. But between their view and ours, there is no essential repugnance; the effectual abolition of slavery, and the thorough improvement of the Colored Race, are, at the first glance, perceived to be not only inseparable, but mutually dependent. We may pursue our end in our way, and they may pursue their end in their way, without any necessary collision. On their scheme of operations and the agencies which they employ, it is not for us, as a society, to pronounce an opinion. We only say here, that we design neither to oppose them, nor to rival them; and that, so far as they can succeed either in elevating the free people of color, or in promoting an intelligent and intense disapprobation of slavery and of all who uphold it, we shall rejoice in their success as in our own.

3. It has seemed to us a sufficient reason for the movement we are attempting, that there is, on the part of American Christians and philanthropists, a great amount of kind feeling towards the Colored Race, which has not yet been sufficiently brought into action. Thousands among the best men in the land,—whether wisely or not, we attempt not to decide—stand aloof from the operations of both the societies to which we have referred, chiefly, not to say solely, because of the contentions in which these operations have unhappily become involved. There are churches, there are ministers of the gospel, there are benevolent, active and influential individuals, who, it is believed, are ready and solicitous to combine their exertions for the welfare of the colored people, as soon as they can see how to act without taking sides in the unfortunate and disastrous conflict between opposite parties. If we can call forth and embody this as yet unorganized benevolence towards the people of color—if we can do anything towards pointing out a field of combined action for this object, into which these contentions need not be carried,—the intelligent and benevolent public will not be slow to justify the formation of our Union.

4. At the same time, it is to be observed, that there is much to be done in behalf of the Colored Race, which is not done, or likely to be done, under existing organizations. The efforts of the Coloniza-

tion Society are limited to a single object. It can move only in one line. And without disparaging that object, we may say that more than that—far more, must be done, before the claims of the Colored Race on our benevolence, or our justice, begin to be answered. The efforts of the Anti-Slavery Society admit of a wider range. But—to confine ourselves to a single specification of what lies beyond their sphere—the nature of their undertaking makes it impracticable for them to do anything, directly or indirectly, to promote the efforts which are made, or which ought to be made, for the welfare and improvement of slaves continuing in bondage. To us, and, if we have not altogether misjudged, to a great portion of the reflecting public, one of the most cheering signs of the times in relation to the great object of our efforts, is found in the fact that Christian sensibility in the slave-holding states is awaking to the claims of the enslaved for religious instruction—in the fact that churches and ecclesiastical judicatories are taking up, as a duty of the most urgent importance, the work of securing for the slaves within the reach of their influence, a knowledge of the sublime truths, the precious consolations, and the inspiring and ennobling motives of the word of God—in the fact that ministers of the gospel, young men endowed with superior talents and various attainments, and invested with the confidence alike of the slave and of the master, give themselves to this work, with the self-denying zeal of apostles—and in the fact that these efforts are received with unexpected favor by men who make no pretensions to Christian benevolence, on the ground that the interest of the proprietor is promoted by the Christian instruction and discipline of the slave. We see in these facts, not a conspiracy to divert public attention from the great question of abolition, and thus to perpetuate the bondage of the slave; nor a design to pervert the peaceful and benignant influences of the gospel, and to make Christianity serve as the guardian angel of slavery; nor any tendency to prevent either individual or general emancipation; but rather an indication that the elastic spirit of Christian enterprise, which seeks the conversion of every creature, is beginning to develop itself, even amid the many opposing influences inseparable from the social constitution of those states; and a proof that, in the districts where these efforts are begun, the slave is beginning to be regarded not merely as a chattel, but as a man, and that slavery there is about to arrive at that point, at which the improvement of the slave's condition is a matter of

necessary economy on the part of his master; and a ground of hope that one improvement will lead to another, and one manifestation of kindness towards the enslaved will beget another, and that thus masters and slaves will be preparing for that consummation so devoutly to be wished, the peaceful abolition of their existing relation, and the substitution of other relations, less at war with the theory of republican institutions, less offensive to the common conscience of mankind, and less malignant in their influence on the character and interests of the parties. Now is it not practicable for the benevolent and Christian public in the United States, generally, to co-operate in some way with those individuals and associations, who, in the midst of Slavery, are thus seeking the welfare of the slaves? Is it not practicable, by argument and by Christian kindness, to subdue opposition and passion, and to spread a system of religious instruction throughout the slave-holding portion of the country? Ought not the whole country to be made acquainted with all that is done, as well as with all that is not done, for the instruction and salvation of our enslaved population? And, not to refer at present to any other topic, do we not find occasion here, and scope, for the action of a new association?

But the question will be raised in every quarter, what *measures* does this Union propose for the promotion of its great object? How is it to operate for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race? We are aware that in the answer to this question are involved, essentially, all the merits of our enterprise; and that it were unreasonable to ask any to co-operate, with us, till we have clearly announced what we propose to do. And therefore we desire to exhibit, without reserve, what, with a humble reliance on the guidance and favor of Him to whom every good work belongs, we shall endeavor to perform.

Respecting the propriety, or expediency, or even the duty, of political action for the relief of the oppressed people of color, we have here nothing to say. Be it that such action is deemed necessary by others, we shall not attempt to interfere with, or to supersede, the efforts which they may choose to make in this way. The work of excitement, of popular agitation, of political combination and influence, we leave to others; not as condemning the exercise of one of the highest and most sacred privileges of citizenship, but simply

because we think that we, as a society, can prosecute our object most effectually by keeping away from the arena of such conflicts.

On the contrary, our attention will be directed to the following humble departments of effort. In the progress of our work, other ways of advancing upon our object may be offered to our view ; but at present, our scheme of operations includes especially these particulars :

I. We invite the attention of all the friends of this cause, to the duty of combined and systematic local efforts for the improvement of the people of color in all our cities and larger towns. In the cities of even the most northern states, there are large and compact masses of this sort of population. The propriety of efforts for the improvement of their condition and character, none but the hard-hearted and unbelieving can question. Everywhere, these people suffer under many embarrassments and impositions. To a lamentable extent, they suffer from their own ignorance, and from habits of unthriftiness. They suffer, often, from the want of regular and regularly productive employment. In many places, they suffer because to other demoralizing influences is added the absence of suitable religious instruction. Multitudes of their children have not adequate opportunities of acquiring those elements of knowledge, which are essential to their usefulness and happiness in this, or in any other country.

The efforts which have been made heretofore, and which are still prosecuted in many places, are, on the whole, undoubtedly a fit model for similar efforts elsewhere. An association which shall be the recognized and active patron of the people of color, which shall help them by seconding and guiding their efforts to help themselves, which shall supply pecuniary assistance so far as it shall be needed for the sick and helpless among them, which shall carefully seek to stimulate their charity towards each other in circumstances of distress, and which, in brief, shall do for them whatever is demanded by an enlightened and considerate benevolence,—ought to exist in every place in which the people of color are sufficiently numerous to constitute a class. Among the particular modes of doing good belonging to the province of such associations, the following deserve to be here enumerated :

1. Religious instruction, by affectionate, discreet and faithful teachers, should be provided for the colored people, in such forms as

may be best suited to their wants. Wherever they are sufficiently numerous to form a religious congregation by themselves, they ordinarily prefer to do so ; and, if we mistake not, the obvious advantages of such an arrangement, when practicable, are more than the disadvantages.

2. Schools should be provided, in which every colored child shall be enabled to acquire as good an education, as is due by birthright to the other inhabitants of this country. In those states in which common schools are established by law and at the public expense, the colored child has the same right to education with the children of white parents. But even in those states, there is always danger that without the patronage of vigilant friends, the colored people will be defrauded of their rights as established by law. Under the pretence of putting them into separate schools, they are sometimes excluded from the well taught and munificently supported public schools, and are placed under the care of less competent teachers, who are employed only for a small portion of the year. Where there are no public schools, the necessity of associated benevolent action is obviously still more imperious.

3. The colored people everywhere need aid in bringing up their children to respectable and regular employments. The greatest temporal benefit which can be conferred on a colored boy in this country, is, to give him a good trade. How few are the colored mechanics who do not find constant occupation, or who do not provide respectably for themselves and their families. And yet how few colored boys have the opportunity of learning any mechanic art.

4. To improve either the condition or the character of the colored people, they must be taught the habit of saving and accumulation. Property is worth as much to a colored man, as it is to a white man ; and property in the hands of an intelligent and honest colored man, is worth as much to the commonwealth as if he were white. Teach a colored man to lay by something from his daily earnings by extra effort and self-denial, and he is already more of a man, both in his own eyes and in the eyes of the community. In no one way, then, can the friends of these people do them good more directly and efficiently, than by enabling them to make a safe, and if possible, lucrative deposit of their savings. Where there is a Savings' Bank, they should be kindly incited to avail themselves of its advantages. Where there is none, some substitute should be provided.

In proposing these efforts, we do not demand that associations instituted in accordance with our suggestions shall be in name or form auxiliary to this Union, or shall be considered at all as adopting any principles ascribed to us, or abjuring any principles ascribed to others, in relation to other topics. We only ask that such efforts may be organized, that the good may be done, and that in the doing of it, there may be a union of beneficent hands and philanthropic minds, without reference to questions that pertain to other branches of the great enterprise for the deliverance of our country from its crimes and perils, and for the redemption of the African race. Surely, there need be no dissension respecting the usefulness of such efforts. Surely, all who desire the welfare of the colored people, can unite in the principle, that *one* way to obtain for that class of our population a more advantageous station in society, and a progressive diminution of their burdens, is, by leading them to improve to the utmost the privileges which are actually within their reach.

II. We propose to use our exertions, as we have opportunity, in bringing forward promising young men of color, and aiding their education in the higher branches of knowledge. The bearing of this on the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race, is too obvious to require elucidation. Happily for our object, there are institutions in this country, at which the colored pupil can pursue, under able instructors, all the branches of a liberal and finished education. Yet the number of individuals actually improving these advantages, is far less than might be expected. Educated men of color are needed not only to co-operate in promoting the intellectual and moral elevation of their kindred in this country, but to sustain a most important agency in the yet greater and more comprehensive work of elevating the Colored Race throughout the world. The myriads in the British Colonies, now either emancipated, or passing through the process of emancipation, might receive a large portion of their teachers more easily from this country than from any other. In Hayti, colored men from the United States, well furnished with science, political, mechanical, or physical, or otherwise well prepared to aid in forming and developing the mind of an infant nation, would find a ready welcome, and an ample and honorable field of usefulness. Africa, too, must be explored, its resources searched out, its scientific treasures brought to light, by scientific travellers of African blood and constitution. The native tribes of that continent must be made acquainted with the gospel, and with the sciences

and arts of Christendom, by teachers of their own race and complexion. The colonies there must, for a season, receive their leading and enlightened minds, their politicians and jurists, their teachers, their physicians, their Christian ministers, chiefly, if not exclusively, from among the colored people of this country. Yet, for all these great purposes, how few colored youth are at this moment in a course of training ! We shall seek earnestly for some way in which we may co-operate in supplying this deficiency. It cannot be doubted that diligent inquiry may find, scattered through the land, the young men of color, fit to be educated, whose education shall act with incalculable power on the destinies of their race.

III. We believe that a full exhibition of all the facts respecting the condition of the Colored Race, and a full illustration of all the influences which conspire to depress them in this country and elsewhere, will be more powerful than perhaps anything else, in forming that enlightened and decided state of the public mind, which must be everywhere formed in order to their complete relief and elevation. We propose, therefore, to spare no pains, and no reasonable expense, in the work of investigating, and collating, and publishing to the world in the form of clear statements and undeniable deductions, all the facts that can be ascertained in relation to such heads of inquiry as the following :

1. THE FREE PEOPLE OF COLOR IN THIS COUNTRY.

(a.) Their number, and the number of families, in each state and district.

(b.) Their legal privileges and disabilities, under the legislation of the several states and of Congress.

(c.) Their employments ;—from what employments they are excluded by law or by public prejudice.

(d.) Their opportunities for acquiring knowledge ;—the number and character of the schools open to them ; the number of pupils ; the number of children who have no means of instruction.

(e.) The amount of property owned by these people in the several states ;—how much, in proportion to their numbers, as compared with other classes of people.

(f.) Their increase, and its causes ;—how much of it in each state is natural, and how much is by emancipation or immigration.

2. SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE TRADE.

(a.) The legislation and jurisprudence of each state and territory in respect to slavery ; and the practical operation of the laws as

affecting the power of the master, and the protection of the slave, and the character and happiness of both.

(b.) The economy of slavery, or its influence in the production, distribution and consumption of wealth.

(c.) The commerce in slaves, as carried on within the United States; how many are transported from one part of the country to another; which are the exporting states, and to what amount; which the purchasing states and territories, and to what amount, and for what uses; who are the carriers; what restraints upon this commerce in the laws; what the bearings of it, on the wealth, safety and character of the parties.

(d.) The means of instruction and improvement enjoyed by the slaves, as compared with those enjoyed by the laboring class in other countries, and especially under the despotic governments; their actual improvement; how far they have ceased to be barbarians and pagans.

### 3. THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

} The causes, political, commercial and moral, which, in various instances, have brought about or necessitated the extinction of slavery.

(b.) The processes or forms of abolition, at different periods, and under different governments, and their comparative adaptedness to the legitimate end of abolition.

(c.) The effect of abolition on property; what bearing it has had on the value of real estate and of other kinds of wealth in different states of society; and how this illustrates the reasonableness and extent of the master's alleged right to compensation.

(d.) The results of abolition, as affecting the condition of the emancipated population and the general welfare of society; the actual condition of the Colored Race where they have been emancipated, and the influences that modify that condition.

The results of such investigations, we conceive, will not only afford the most convincing demonstration that slavery is wrong and ought to be abandoned, but will throw a strong light on all the difficult and perplexing questions connected with the subject. And the publication of the facts and principles thus ascertained beyond the possibility of denial, may be made effectual in bringing the public mind, not only of the free states, but of the whole country, to that position in which there shall be but one opinion of the morality of slavery, and of its relations to public and private interest, and of the

duty both of legislatures and of individual citizens. Our fellow citizens of the southern states are not insensible to the estimation in which they may be held by the enlightened and deliberate public sentiment of the country and of the world. Nor are they, as a community, incapable of being instructed, or of being moved by truth, even in relation to slavery. They sustain slavery, and insist on its perpetuity, chiefly because they deceive themselves. They deceive themselves by refusing to look the system in the face, and to ponder its theory as delineated in their own statute books, and its practice as developed within the range of their daily observation. They deceive themselves with the idea that, on the whole, the degraded and wretched colored man is as well off, as his nature and the interests of society will allow. They deceive themselves with the terrific fancy, that the first movement of change will be convulsion, and the first whisper of discussion will be like the heedless shout among the mountains, which loosens the poised avalanche, to rush upon the vale below with instantaneous ruin. By such delusions and terrors, do they justify themselves, in maintaining slavery. But cannot their delusions, unconquerable as they may be by reasonings *a priori*, be dispelled by the presentation of facts? Can they resist the appeal to their own judgment and to the common judgment of mankind, which would be made by a simple, intelligible, unimpassioned, and indisputable statement of what slavery is, as it exists under their legislation? Can they resist, when all the effects of that system on their prosperity as states and as individuals, shall have been made manifest, not by angry disputation, but as by the steady and cautious researches of science? Can they resist, when vigorous conclusions from the widest induction and the most careful analysis of facts, shall have shown what the abolition of slavery is, and by what processes it may be most safely and happily accomplished?

Nor will these investigations throw light on slavery alone. We regard them as important to every department of our great enterprise. The question how to accomplish most entirely, not only the relief of the Colored Race in this country from the power of unrighteous laws, but their elevation here, and in every other country, in which they are a distinct and depressed class; and the question how to pour light most effectually and rapidly over the dark realms of Africa, are questions which, in the existing state of our knowledge, can be answered only in part. Some things we can see, which ought to be done, and which there is an obvious way of

doing ; and in our view, the wisest method is, to begin with doing these things, and at the same time to inquire diligently in every quarter, what else can be done to most advantage, and to search out every fact that can throw light on the path of our philanthropy. This is our method of proceeding. We ask the co-operation of all to whom our views commend themselves as just, and the patience of those who think their own views too enlightened for further illumination, and too thorough to admit of any joint action with a system so deliberate.

In particular do we ask, for this method of proceeding, the co-operation of the professed followers of Christ in the slave-holding states. We would not charge them with a total neglect of their duties to the Colored Race: We appreciate the difficulties of their position. We rejoice to know that the claims of the slaves on Christian sympathy and Christian beneficence, are receiving more and more of their attention. But we cannot refrain from asking them, in the name of their Master and ours, whether they are now doing, whether they have as yet dared to think of doing, all that they ought to do for the degraded and perishing population which swarms around them. Is it enough, merely to arrange, for these enslaved millions, a system of oral instruction in religion, and to leave them from generation to generation, without the power of reading the Scriptures, and subject to all the corrupting and brutalizing influences of slavery? Not that such a system is to be condemned as no better than total neglect, or as a compromise with oppression ;—but is it enough? Ought it to satisfy the philanthropy of those, whose spirit is the spirit of Christ? We make no appeal here to politicians, to statesmen, to men of merely worldly views, to men who can conceive of no higher and holier impulse than the love of country. But we do appeal to those who are conscious of purer and nobler affections, whose citizenship is in heaven, who have identified themselves with the service of Him whose gospel, preached to the poor, is ‘deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound.’ We appeal to them, as to men who believe that the colored man and the slave is their ‘brother, for whom Christ died.’ We appeal to them, as to men who believe that the time is at hand when, under the universal dominion of the blessed and only Potentate, every fetter shall be broken, and all mankind shall be one family, rejoicing in the ‘liberty of the sons of God.’ We appeal to them, as to men who confess their obligations to do all in their power, at every hazard,

and at the expense of every self-denial, to bring about the fulfilment of that inspiring hope. And we ask them, as in the name of all the hopes of bleeding humanity,—as in the name of all the kindreds of God's redeemed,—as in the name of the Lord who bought them,—Are you doing all that you ought to do, for the alleviation, for the removal of the systematized oppression that grinds in the dust the millions of your colored brethren? Will you refuse to give us your powerful aid in our attempt to search out and to exhibit all the truth concerning that system, and concerning the possibility and mode of applying a remedy? A Sunday school for the slave is well—a catechism for the slave, to be learned even by the laborious process of oral teaching, is well—a chapel and a preacher for the slave is well; but is this all that is demanded by the law of love? Who will delude himself with the notion that this is righting all the wrongs of the colored man? Whose conscience does not tell him, as if anticipating the decision of the final Judge, 'These things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone?'

Shall we be told by Christian men, that all this is no concern of ours? Away with such folly! All this is our concern. All the darkness, all the misery, all the wickedness that fills the earth is our concern. Not as Americans merely, but as men, and especially as men serving that God who 'hath made of one blood all nations,' and hoping in that Saviour who gave himself a ransom for all, we are bound to care and to labor for the relief of these degraded millions; and not for their relief only, but for their complete elevation, and their investiture with all the dignities of manhood.

Upon that labor we enter, trusting in God that no clamor from earth or hell shall drive us from our purpose. We go forward, looking to the Author of all good for wisdom and strength, for patience and success. The work is his, and his shall be the victory.

DANIEL NOYES.  
B. B. EDWARDS.  
E. A. ANDREWS.  
CHARLES SCUDDER.  
HENRY EDWARDS.  
JOSEPH TRACY.  
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

*Boston, March 16, 1835.*

# PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

## FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY.

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1835.

The Convention was called to order by DANIEL NOYES, Esq., of Boston. Hon. WILLIAM REED, of Marblehead, was appointed Chairman, and Rev. J. W. CHICKERING, of Bolton, Secretary. Prayer was offered by Rev. I. W. PUTNAM, of Portsmouth, N. H. The Convention was then fully organized by the choice of

Hon. WILLIAM REED, President.  
Rev. BARON STOW, Vice President.  
Rev. J. W. CHICKERING, } Secretaries.  
CHARLES TAPPAN, Esq., }

The following Constitution was subsequently adopted by the Convention :

### CONSTITUTION.

ART. I. This Society shall be called 'THE AMERICAN UNION FOR THE RELIEF AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE COLORED RACE.'

ART. II. The object of this Society shall be to promote, in all suitable ways, the intellectual and moral elevation of the Colored Race ; and by disseminating information, and exerting a kind moral influence, to convince all American citizens, that the system of Slavery in this country is wrong, and ought to be universally abandoned.

ART. III. The Society shall be composed of all persons present at its formation who shall express their approbation of its object by signing the Constitution ; and of such others as shall from time to time be elected.

**ART. IV.** The officers of this Society shall be a President, Vice Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurer, and two Auditors, who shall be annually chosen by ballot, and shall perform the duties ordinarily assigned to such officers, and continue in office until others are chosen.

**ART. V.** There shall also be an Executive Committee of seven members, who shall be chosen annually by ballot, and who shall, as may be practicable and most useful, obtain pecuniary means, employ agents, form Associations, and take all suitable measures to accomplish the above mentioned objects, and shall annually report their doings to the Society.

**ART. VI.** This Constitution may be altered on recommendation of the Executive Committee, or at the written request of any ten members of the Society, by a vote of two thirds of the members present at any annual meeting.

It was then

*Resolved*, That this Society is organized with no designs of hostility in respect to any other institution ; but on the contrary, with the cordial desire that relations of friendliness and co-operation may exist among all the friends of the colored people.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, JAN. 14, 1835.

The American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race met according to appointment.

By request, the officers of the Convention presided till others were appointed.

On motion of Rev. M. BADGER,

*Voted*, That the Executive Committee be instructed to prepare and publish an Exposition of the principles and measures of this Society ; and that it be recommended to the friends of the colored people throughout the country, to take immediate measures to form associations auxiliary to this Society.

Adjourned to meet to-morrow, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 1835.

The Society met, agreeably to adjournment.

On motion of REV. LEONARD BACON,

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be instructed to investigate as minutely as possible,

1. The physical, intellectual, and moral condition of the People of Color in the non-slave-holding states :

2. The social and civil privileges, and the means of intellectual and religious instruction, enjoyed by the People of Color in the slave-holding states :

3. The means of instruction and improvement enjoyed by the slave population.

On motion of E. A. ANDREWS, Esq.,

*Resolved*, That the civilization of the inhabitants of Africa, and the improvement of their condition, be referred to the Executive Committee, as an important department of the field of benevolent effort, included in the design of this Union.

On motion of Rev. President WHEELER,

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be requested to inform themselves of the relations which the slaves sustain to the laws, in the several states and territories in which they dwell ; to learn to what extent, and in what particulars, they are under the protection of law ; and, as far as may be, the influence of their various legal conditions on the moral and intellectual character of the slaves.

On motion of WILLIAM BLANCHARD,

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be requested to inquire into the condition of the Colored Race, in those places where Slavery has ceased to exist.

On motion of Rev. N. ADAMS,

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be requested to insert in their exposition of the principles of this Society, a statement of the feelings of interest and sympathy felt by us in regard to slave-holders, who are anxious to be freed from the burden of Slavery.

On motion of SOLOMON STODDARD, Jr. Esq.,

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be authorized to call meetings of this Society, whenever they may think it expedient.

## FORM OF A CONSTITUTION FOR AUXILIARY SOCIETIES.

**ARTICLE I.** This Society shall be called — Auxiliary of the American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race.

**ART. II.** The object shall be, to aid the American Union in its efforts to promote, in all suitable ways, the intellectual and moral elevation of the Colored Race; and by disseminating information, and exerting a kind moral influence, to convince all American citizens, that the system of Slavery in this country is wrong, and ought to be universally abandoned.

**ART. III.** Any individual may become a member, by signing the Constitution, and by paying —.

**ART. IV.** All moneys obtained by subscription or otherwise, shall be appropriated under the direction of the officers of the Society, for the general purposes mentioned in Article second.

**ART. V.** The officers of the Society shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall perform the duties incident to such offices respectively, and shall constitute a Board of Managers to transact the business of the Society.

**ART. VI.** The Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held —; at which time the officers shall be elected, who shall continue in office until a new election.

**ART. VII.** The officers of the Society may call a meeting at such other times, as they may think proper.

**ART. VIII.** This Constitution may be altered at any Annual Meeting, by a vote of two thirds of the members present.

# OFFICERS OF THE AMERICAN UNION.

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## PRESIDENT.

HON. WILLIAM REED.

## VICE PRESIDENTS.

HON. STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER,  
 RT. REV. ALEXANDER V. GRISWOLD, D. D.  
 HON. ROGER M. SHERMAN,  
 REV. NATHAN LORD, D. D.  
 HON. THEODORE FRELINGHUYSEN,  
 REV. JOHN WHEELER, D. D.  
 REV. FRANCIS WAYLAND, D. D.  
 REV. ELIJAH HEDDING, D. D.  
 HON. SIDNEY WILLARD,  
 WILLIAM LADD, Esq.  
 GERRIT SMITH, Esq.  
 BENJAMIN SILLIMAN, LL. D.

REV. JACOB ABBOTT, RECORDING SECRETARY.

—————, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

JAMES HAUGHTON, TREASURER.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

DANIEL NOYES,  
 B. B. EDWARDS,  
 E. A. ANDREWS,  
 CHARLES SCUDDER,  
 HENRY EDWARDS,  
 JOSEPH TRACY,  
 SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.